

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 058289

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INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 SSM-03 SY-05 CIAE-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:DP

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MS. GREEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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PAGE 02 STATE 058289

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
CINCEUR

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E.O: 11622: K/J

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
MARCH 9, 1976:

THERE WERE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS YESTERDAY ON THE
SHEEHAN ARTICLE, AND I THOUGHT I WOULD JUST RUN THROUGH
OUR ANSWERS TO ALL OF THOSE QUESTIONS. IF YOU WOULD AGREE,
LET ME GO THROUGH THEM AND THEN SEE IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER
QUESTIONS.

FIRST QUESTION WAS: AND I JUST WENT THROUGH THE TRANS-
SCRIPT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER:

"HAVE YOU HAD ANY QUESTIONS OR PROTESTS FROM ANY FOREIGN
GOVERNMENTS ABOUT THESE ALLEGED VERBATIM CONVERSATIONS?"

A. NO.

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PAGE 03 STATE 058289

THE SECOND QUESTION WAS: AND I THINK THERE WAS MORE
THAN ONE:

"DID THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAKE ANY DISTINCTION BE-
TWEEN LEAKS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND LEAKS FROM
OUTSIDE THE STATE DEPARTMENT? CONGRESS, FOR EXAMPLE."
AND I THINK ONE QUESTIONER SAID THAT WE DESCRIBED SOME OF

THESE LEAKS AS "MCCARTHYISM."

THE ANSWER IS: NO, WE MAKE NO DISTINCTION. NOW THE REASON THE SECRETARY CHARACTERIZED THE LEAKS FROM THE PIKE COMMITTEE AS MCCARTHYISM, WAS BECAUSE HE FELT THEY WERE DISTORTED, INACCURATE AND MALICIOUS; AND I THINK HE SAID SO AT THAT TIME.

"DESCRIBE THE DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE THAT THE SECRETARY HAD OF MR. SHEEHAN'S SEEING PEOPLE IN THE DEPARTMENT, AND THE LATITUDE OF THE AUTHORITY THAT SUBORDINATES HAD IN BRIEFING MR. SHEEHAN."

ANSWER: THE SECRETARY KNEW, IN GENERAL, THAT MR. SHEEHAN WAS INTERESTED IN SPEAKING TO STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS, AND HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO THAT. IN FACT, THE SECRETARY GAVE HIS GENERAL O.K., TO BE HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO MR. SHEEHAN'S QUESTIONS.

BUT THE SECRETARY NEVER AUTHORIZED ANYONE TO REVEAL THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS, AND HAD NO IDEA SUCH WAS BEING DONE.

THE NEXT QUESTION WAS: "HOW MUCH TIME DID THE SECRETARY SPEND WITH SHEEHAN ON THIS SUBJECT, AND WHAT WAS THE BASIS OF THEIR CONVERSATION? WAS IT ON BACKGROUND?"

ANSWER: THE SECRETARY MET ON OCTOBER 29, 1975, WITH MR. SHEEHAN FOR ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS; AND THAT IS THE ONLY MEETING WHICH THE SECRETARY RECALLS HAVING WITH MR. SHEEHAN IN WHICH SHEEHAN'S ARTICLE WAS DISCUSSED.

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PAGE 04 STATE 058289

ON AUGUST 22ND, 1975, MR. SHEEHAN FLEW ON THE SECRETARY'S PLANE FROM TEL AVIV TO ALEXANDRIA, AS PART OF THE PRESS CONTINGENT ACCOMPANYING THE SECRETARY. THE SECRETARY DOES NOT RECALL MEETING MR. SHEEHAN ALONE AT THAT TIME AND IF HE DID, IT WOULD ONLY HAVE BEEN A VERY BRIEF MEETING.

THE SECRETARY ALSO RECALLS MEETING MR. SHEEHAN WITH A GROUP OF UNIVERSITY PEOPLE AT A MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE

ON MAY 1ST, 1975, IN THE DEPARTMENT. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF MR. SHEEHAN'S PROJECT AT THAT MEETING.

QUESTION: "AT WHAT LEVEL WOULD THE RELEASE OF MEMCONS HAVE TO BE AUTHORIZED?"

ANSWER: I REITERATE, THERE NEVER WAS ANY AUTHORIZATION FOR THE RELEASE OR DISCLOSURE OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TO MR. SHEEHAN.

QUESTION: "IS THERE ANY PRECEDENT FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION BEING TAKEN IN A CASE LIKE THIS, INVOLVING UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES?"

ANSWER: WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO VERIFY ANY DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN IN THE PAST FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE.

QUESTION: "WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE FACTS IN THIS PRESENT CASE?"

ANSWER: THE DETERMINATION OF FACTS IN THIS CASE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT, MR. EAGLEBURGER. ALSO, THE SECRETARY HAS PERSONALLY INTERVIEWED SEVERAL OFFICIALS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED.

QUESTION: "WILL A LIE DETECTOR BE USED?"

ANSWER: NO.

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PAGE 05 STATE 058289

QUESTION: "ISN'T THERE A PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH THE SECRETARY SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS FOR MR. SHEEHAN?"

ANSWER: THE ANSWER IS THE SAME AS TO THE EARLIER QUESTION -- THAT THE SECRETARY KNEW IN GENERAL THAT MR. SHEEHAN WAS INTERESTED IN SPEAKING TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AND HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO THAT. HE GAVE A GENERAL O.K. BUT HE NEVER AUTHORIZED ANYONE TO REVEAL THE CONTENTS OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

A. ON BACKGROUND, I BELIEVE THERE WAS BOTH A WRITTEN PIECE OF PAPER OUTLINING THE PROPOSAL TO THE SECRETARY, AS WELL AS ORAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE SUBJECT. BUT, STILL

ON BACKGROUND, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL O.K. WAS IN WRITING BUT IT WAS AN ORAL APPROVAL.

Q. IN WHAT CASE IS THAT -- WHICH WRITTEN PIECE OF PAPER FROM WHO IS THAT?

A. I AM NOT ABLE TO IDENTIFY WHO IT CAME FROM AT THIS

TIME.

Q. YOU MEAN IT WAS FROM THE SECRETARY?

A. NO, THERE WAS A PAPER TO THE SECRETARY SUGGESTING COOPERATION WITH MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. BUT THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL O.K., THERE IS NO PIECE OF PAPER, YOU SAID?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. DOESN'T HE NOTE -- MAKE A NOTE ON THESE THINGS?

A. IT WORKS DIFFERENT WAYS. IN GENERAL, TERMS THE SECRETARY MAY GIVE SPECIFIC WRITTEN APPROVAL, OR HE MAY GIVE AN ORAL APPROVAL.

Q. WOULDN'T THIS HAVE COME FROM THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 06 STATE 058289

ADVISER?

A. I AM NOT ABLE AT THIS TIME TO IDENTIFY THE PEOPLE WHO WERE INVOLVED.

Q. WELL, YOU GOT A PIECE OF PAPER TO THE SECRETARY, SUGGESTING COOPERATION.

A. WITH SHEEHAN.

Q. WITH SHEEHAN. AND YOU HAVE NO NAME ON THAT?

A. YES, WE HAVE A NAME, BUT I AM NOT ABLE TO GIVE YOU THAT NAME.

Q. I THINK THE QUESTION WAS, "DID THE SECRETARY PUT ANY MARKS ON THIS PIECE OF PAPER THAT CAME TO HIM?"

A. I AM NOT ABLE TO TELL YOU WHETHER THE SECRETARY PERSONALLY, IN HIS OWN HAND, ATTACHED A NOTE OR WHETHER HE GAVE ORAL COMMUNICATION TO AN AIDE, WHO MADE A RECORD OF IT, AND WHETHER THIS ORAL REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL MAY HAVE BEEN MADE IN WRITING OR WAS MADE ORALLY DIRECTLY.

Q. AREN'T YOU ABLE TO GIVE THE NAME BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW THE NAME, OR BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GIVE THE NAME?

A. THE DEPARTMENT IS NOT PREPARED, AT THIS TIME, TO IDENTIFY THOSE PERSONS -- THAT PERSON, OR PERSONS -- WHO MAY HAVE MADE THE SUGGESTION.

Q. "WILL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS BE MADE PUBLIC?"

A. I AM NOT ABLE TO RESPOND TO THAT QUESTION TODAY AS I WAS NOT ABLE TO YESTERDAY. I AM JUST NOT ABLE TO ANSWER THAT AT THIS TIME.

Q. THE SAME QUESTION: BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW OR BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SAY?
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PAGE 07 STATE 058289

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. "COULD YOU FIND OUT SPECIFICALLY WHEN THE INVESTIGATION WAS DECIDED UPON AND LAUNCHED?"

A. IT WAS DECIDED, EARLY LAST WEEK, TO DETERMINE IF ANY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAD IN FACT BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN ON THE BASIS OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

--- AS I INDICATED LAST FRIDAY, AND REITERATED AGAIN YESTERDAY, IF THIS HAD BEEN DONE, THAT IS, IF ANYONE HAD BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN ON THE BASIS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS, THAT WOULD HAVE REPRESENTED A GROSS VIOLATION OF CONFIDENCE -- AND WAS NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE SECRETARY.

Q. "WHAT IS IT THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS INVESTIGATING?"

A. THE DEPARTMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE IF ANY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN ON THE BASIS OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS. IT IS NOT, IN THE DEPARTMENT'S JUDGMENT, A TRIVIAL MATTER.

--- ANY FAIR INVESTIGATION, AND OUR INVESTIGATION WILL BE FAIR, HAS TO LOOK INTO THE MOTIVATION OF THE OFFICERS INVOLVED AS WELL AS THE RECORD OF THESE OFFICERS IN ADDITION TO THE FACTS OF THE NATURE OF THE BRIEFINGS, THEMSELVES.

Q. WAS THAT "OFFICERS" SINGULAR OR PLURAL?

A. PLURAL.

AND AFTER WE HAVE DONE ALL OF THAT, WE WILL DECIDE WHAT DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN.

--- THEN I WAS ASKED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS, WHICH I
HAVE GROUPED TOGETHER:

--- "DO THE INDIVIDUALS IN QUESTION, THOSE WHO DID
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PAGE 08 STATE 058289

BRIEF MR. SHEEHAN, DO THEY MAINTAIN THAT THEY WERE AUTHOR-
IZED TO DO SO BY THE SECRETARY?"

-- - "DOES ANYONE ACKNOWLEDGE TO THE DEPARTMENT EX-
ACTLY WHAT THEY SAID TO MR. SHEEHAN IN HIS BRIEFINGS?

--- THE ANSWERS TO ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS IS: WE ARE
CONTINUING TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER BUT, I REPEAT AGAIN,
THE DISCLOSURE OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS WAS NOT
AUTHORIZED.

--- I WAS ASKED TO BE SPECIFIC WHETHER MR. SHEEHAN
SPOKE TO MR. SISCO OR MR. ATHERTON, AND OTHER OFFICIALS AT
THAT LEVEL.

A. MR. SHEEHAN SPOKE TO A NUMBER OF STATE DEPARTMENT
OFFICIALS.

AND THE FINAL QUESTION: "WAS A REQUEST MADE OF THE
NSC? TO SEND OVER MEMORANDA OF CONVERSATION IN ORDER THAT
MR. SHEEHAN COULD BE BRIEFED?"

A. THE ANSWER IS: NO.

Q. IS THE DEPARTMENT SATISFIED NOW THAT CLASSIFIED
DOCUMENTS WERE, INDEED, INVOLVED IN THIS WHOLE SITUATION?

A. WE ARE STILL NOT PREPARED TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION.
THAT IS PART OF THE EXAMINATION AND THE INVESTIGATION.

Q. I ASKED A QUESTION WHICH I THINK YOU ATTEMPTED TO
REWORD, BUT, SPECIFICALLY, I THINK MY QUESTION WAS:
"DOESN'T THE SECRETARY KNOW WHO BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN ON
THE MEMOS OF CONVERSATIONS?"

A. WELL OBVIOUSLY, WE HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA WHO
BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN, AND AS I INDICATED, THE SECRETARY
HAS, HIMSELF, SPOKEN TO SOME OF THE OFFICIALS WHO DID
BRIEF MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. DID YOU SAY WHEN THAT WAS, AND TO WHOM HE SPOKE?
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PAGE 09 STATE 058289

A. DO YOU MEAN THE DATES?

Q. YES.

A. I AM NOT GOING TO IDENTIFY THE OFFICIALS.

Q. WHEN THE SECRETARY --

A. I WILL CHECK INTO THAT.

Q. I ASKED YOU THAT QUESTION BEFORE WHEN YOU WERE GOING THROUGH THAT. KISSINGER PERSONALLY INTERVIEWED SEVERAL OFFICIALS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED.

A. YES, OFFICIALS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN BRIEFING MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. ARE YOU AWARE -- IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING AND I CAN'T VOUCH FOR THIS BECAUSE I WASN'T THERE -- BUT MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT NESSEN SAID THIS MORNING THAT THE DISPOSITION OF THIS AFFAIR WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC. IS THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING?

A. I HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED THAT IT WILL BE MADE PUBLIC.

Q. I AM HAVING TROUBLE FOLLOWING THE DISTINCTION YOU SEEM TO BE MAKING, BECAUSE I AM NOT SURE THERE IS A DISTINCTION. IN AT LEAST ONE RESPONSE, YOU OPPOSE, OR YOU OBJECT TO THE BRIEFING OF SHEEHAN ON THE BASIS OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

A. YES.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SECRETARY APPROVED THAT SHEEHAN BE BRIEFED ON HIS MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY -- AND I ASSUME HE APPROVED THAT HE BE BRIEFED RATHER EXTENSIVELY BECAUSE THE MAN WAS WRITING A BOOK.

--- AND YET THE PERSON BRIEFING WAS NOT TO CONDUCT A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 10 STATE 058289

BRIEFING ON THE BASIS OF DOCUMENTS -- NOT ONLY NOT SHOWN THE DOCUMENTS, BUT NOT ON THE BASIS OF DOCUMENTS.

--- I DON'T KNOW HOW A BRIEFER CAN SPLIT HIS MIND THAT WAY AND DISCUSS SOMETHING THAT, QUITE OBVIOUSLY, WOULD BE DOWN ON PAPER.

A. WELL THAT IS ALWAYS A QUESTION OF JUDGMENT THAT OFFICIALS HAVE TO MAKE WHEN THEY ARE ANSWERING QUESTIONS. THE SECRETARY INDICATED, OR GAVE HIS GENERAL O.K., AS I SAID, TO BE HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO MR. SHEEHAN'S QUESTIONS. THE SECRETARY INDICATED, OR GAVE HIS GENERAL O.K., AS I SAID, TO BE HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO MR. SHEEHAN'S QUESTIONS. BUT THAT DID NOT MEAN IN RESPONDING TO THOSE QUESTIONS THAT A BRIEFER WAS AUTHORIZED TO REVEAL

THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

Q. WOULD THE BRIEFER HAVE BEEN OFF BASE IF HE HAD ATTEMPTED TO RECONSTRUCT A CONVERSATION THAT TOOK PLACE BETWEEN, LET'S SAY, BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MR. SADAT, OR MR. ASSAD, OR THE ISRAELI NEGOTIATORS? WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN WITHIN THAT WONDERFUL WORD WE ALL LIKE TO USE, WITHIN THE "PARAMETERS" OF THE SECRETARY'S DIRECTIVE?

A. I AM JUST GIVING MY OWN ANSWER, BUT -- CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN CONCERN OF PROTECTING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES I WOULD SAY THAT A BRIEFING -- AND I AM JUST SPEAKING PERSONALLY AND I MAY BE CORRECTED -- THAT VIOLATED THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WAS CLEARLY NOT AUTHORIZED.

Q. SO TO TRY TO SAY, WELL THEN "THE SECRETARY SAID THIS -- AND SADAT SAID THAT -- " THAT WAS NOT AUTHORIZED?

A. IN MY JUDGMENT, NO.

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PAGE 11 STATE 058289

Q. LEAVING OUT "VERBATIM," OR WHETHER ALL THE COMMAS ARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE -- THAT WAS NOT AUTHORIZED?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. IF MR. EAGLEBURGER IS CONDUCTING THIS INVESTIGATION, WHY DID THE SECRETARY INTERROGATE SEVERAL OFFICIALS?

A. BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE SECRETARY VIEWS THIS APPARENT GROSS VIOLATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

TIALITY. HE IS PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN ALSO ESTABLISHING THE FACTS TO HIS OWN SATISFACTION.

Q. WHO GETS TO INTERROGATE THE SECRETARY? IS THAT MR. EAGLEBURGER'S RESPONSIBILITY?

Q. RIGHT, BUT IS MR. EAGLEBURGER GOING TO QUESTION MR. KISSINGER?

A. I DO NOT THINK THAT MR. EAGLEBURGER IS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S SUPERIOR. I THINK IT'S THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Q. SO HE CAN QUESTION ANYBODY EXCEPT THE SECRETARY?

A. I WAS ALSO ASKED AT YESTERDAY'S BRIEFING WHETHER THE SECRETARY, AS ALLEGED BY MR. SAFIRE, HAD BEEN THE SOURCE OF ANY OF THIS; AND I SAID THAT WAS ABSOLUTELY FALSE.

Q. LEAVING ASIDE FOR THE MOMENT WHETHER HE WAS THE SOURCE, I WONDER IF YOU COULD RESUBMIT THE QUESTION, BECAUSE A LOT OF US WERE ON THE SAME PLANE AND --

--- LET'S TRY IT A DIFFERENT WAY. LET'S ASK THE SECRETARY IF, INDEED, MR. SHEEHAN DIDN'T STAY BEHIND DURING ONE OF OUR CUSTOMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS, AND HAVE A RATHER EXTENSIVE PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY -- WHILE HE WAS ENGAGED IN NEGOTIATIONS.

--- THAT WOULD BE, INDEED, WHEN MEMORIES OF WHAT PEOPLE SAID WOULD BE FRESHEST, AND THAT WOULD BE SOME-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 12 STATE 058289

THING THAT I WOULD THINK IS FINE REPORTING, AND I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ALL MY COLLEAGUES ARE SO UPSET ABOUT PEOPLE GETTING BRIEFED.

A. I WILL RESUBMIT THAT QUESTION TO THE SECRETARY. I ASKED -- THE SECRETARY AND I DISCUSSED HIS MEETINGS WITH MR. SHEEHAN. HE DID REMEMBER THAT MR. SHEEHAN HAD BEEN ON THE SHUTTLE FROM TEL AVIV TO ALEXANDRIA. BUT HE DID NOT RECALL THEIR HAVING A MEETING.

Q. WELL, IT'S QUITE COMMON, AFTER OUR BRIEFINGS, FOR SOMEONE TO ASK IF HE CAN HAVE SOME TIME WITH THE SENIOR OFFICIALS. AND IF THE PROJECT IS SOMETHING THAT PLEASES THE SECRETARY, OR THE SENIOR OFFICIAL, THE MAN IS GIVEN TIME WITH HIM.

A. I WILL CHECK WITH THE SECRETARY, BUT THE SECRE-

TARY'S OWN RECOLLECTION WAS THAT HE HAD ONLY SEEN MR. SHEEHAN THREE TIMES; AND ONLY ONCE DID HE RECALL DISCUSSING MR. SHEEHAN'S PROJECT, AND THAT WAS FOR ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES HERE IN THE DEPARTMENT. I HAVE INDICATED THE OTHER TWO MEETINGS.

Q. WHEN IT WAS ASKED ABOUT HOW DO YOU DRAW THE LINE -- YOU STARTED TO SAY, IT IS ALL IN THE JUDGMENT THAT THE OFFICIALS HAVE TO MAKE FOR THEMSELVES. AND THEN AT LEAST I LOST YOU ON WHETHER YOU WERE SAYING THE JUDGMENT HAS TO BE MADE ON WHETHER TO RELY ON CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS IN BRIEFING SOMEBODY, OR NOT TO. COULD YOU JUST EXPLAIN THAT AGAIN?

A. I THINK WHAT I WAS TRYING TO RESPOND THAT AT ANY BACKGROUND BRIEFING AN OFFICIAL HAS WITH A NEWSMAN, OR WITH ANY PERSON FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC, HE HAS TO MAKE A JUDGMENT IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS THAT HE DOES NOT PROVIDE INFORMATION THAT REVEALS THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS. AND I THINK THE THRUST OF THE EXCHANGE I HAD WAS THAT IT SHOULD BE IN A GENERAL CONTEXT.

Q. WHAT FORM OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION IS AVAILABLE TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 13 STATE 058289

SECRETARY WHEN HE DISCOVERS THE CULPRIT?

A. WE HAVEN'T DECIDED ON WHAT DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN.

Q. IS THERE SOMETHING IN THE MANUAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE THAT PROVIDES FOR -- IS IT A CRIMINAL OFFENSE?

A. THAT IS NOT ANYTHING THAT I AM AWARE OF THAT IS BEING CONSIDERED. IT IS INTERNAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Q. IS IT NOT A FACT THAT THERE IS A PRECEDENT FOR A RESPECTED ACADEMIC WHO HAS WORKED FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT RECENTLY, WHO HAS HAD A SECURITY CLEARANCE RECENTLY, TO BE PROVIDED WITH DOCUMENTS ON THE PROVISIO THAT HE DOES NOT QUOTE DIRECTLY FROM THEM?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF THAT PRECEDENT.

Q. YOU MAKE THE POINT REPEATEDLY THAT WHAT YOU ARE INVESTIGATING IS THE USE OF INFORMATION FROM CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

A. THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

Q. THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. IS IT NOT A FACT THAT VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING INVOLVING THE MIDDLE EAST WAS CLASSIFIED? AND THAT IS WHY THE QUESTION WAS ASKED REPEATEDLY. WHAT IS IT THAT YOU ARE INVESTIGATING, BECAUSE CERTAINLY AT THE OUTSET OF EACH ONE OF THESE MISSIONS, VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING INVOLVING THEM HAS BEEN CLASSIFIED, AS ARE MOST THINGS IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN POLICY CLASSIFIED.

A. IN FACT, MOST ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS THAT I GIVE AT THIS BRIEFING, UNTIL I GIVE THEM, MOST OF THEM ARE PROBABLY BASED ON CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

Q. THAT IS EXACTLY THE POINT ON THAT.

A. AND A JUDGMENT IS MADE. NOW, IN THIS CASE, THERE WAS NO AUTHORIZATION TO DIVULGE THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 14 STATE 058289

DOCUMENTS TO MR. SHEEHAN. BUT THERE WAS AUTHORIZATION TO HELP HIM WITHIN THESE GENERAL GUIDELINES, AND THE GENERAL GUIDELINES THAT ARE COMMONLY KNOWN BY ALL OFFICIALS IN BEING RESPONSIVE TO HIS QUESTIONS.

Q. ISN'T WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT HERE THE USE OF DIRECT QUOTES, OR WHAT PURPORT TO BE DIRECT QUOTES FROM CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE?

A. NO. THAT IS ANOTHER QUESTION WHICH I AM NOT PREPARED TO ANSWER. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER MR. SHEEHAN, IN FACT, VIOLATED BACKGROUND RULES. BUT THE QUESTION WE ARE CONCERNED WITH IS WHETHER OFFICIALS PROVIDED HIM WITH THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS. THAT WAS NOT AUTHORIZED.

Q. TO WHAT TERMS DID MR. SHEEHAN AGREE WHEN HE BEGAN HIS SIXTY OR MORE INTERVIEWS, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE SECRETARY?

A. JUST LET US RECALL THAT WHEN MR. SHEEHAN REPORTED, OR FOREIGN POLICY MAGAZINE REPORTED THAT HE HAD SIXTY INTERVIEWS, THESE WERE HIS INTERVIEWS ALL OVER THE WORLD. HE DID NOT HAVE ANYWHERE NEAR THAT --

Q. JUST HERE, THEN.

A. I WAS ASKED THAT QUESTION YESTERDAY, FOR EXAMPLE. THE IMPLIED QUESTION WAS, DO ANY OF THE OFFICIALS WHO BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN MAINTAIN THAT HE VIOLATED THEIR UNDERSTANDING. AND I SAID I WASN'T ABLE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

Q. SINCE THIS HAS NOW BECOME SORT OF A CAUSE CELEBRE, AND PEOPLE IN THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE FOLLOWING THIS WITH INTEREST, WHAT DO YOU MEAN WHEN YOU SAY THAT THE SECRETARY AUTHORIZED THAT OFFICIALS BE -- QUOTE -- HELPFUL -- UNQUOTE TO MR. SHEEHAN? CAN YOU DEFINE WHAT, IN YOUR MIND, IS BEING HELPFUL, WHAT IT CONSISTS OF -- IF MR. SHEEHAN HAS COME SPECIFICALLY TO DO AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE ON THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS, PRESUMABLY GOING BEYOND WHAT HAS ALREADY APPEARED IN THE PRESS?

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PAGE 15 STATE 058289

A. I CANNOT GIVE YOU A SPECIFIC ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION. SOMEONE ASKED ME THAT QUESTION YESTERDAY. PERHAPS IT WAS YOU. IT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE DECIDED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, AND THE OFFICIAL INVOLVED HAS TO USE HIS OWN JUDGMENT AS TO HOW HE ANSWERS THE QUESTION.

Q. ARE THERE GUIDELINES IN THIS MEMO THAT THE SECRETARY RECEIVED STARTING THIS WHOLE PROCESS?

A. AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, I BELIEVE, THERE WERE BOTH WRITTEN AND ORAL EXCHANGES ON THIS PROJECT. AND I SAID THAT THE SECRETARY HAD GIVEN A GENERAL OKAY THAT OFFICIALS BE HELPFUL TO MR. SHEEHAN IN GETTING ANSWERS TO HIS QUESTIONS. BUT HE DID NOT AUTHORIZE THE DISCLOSURE OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

Q. WAS ONE OFFICIAL DESIGNATED TO BE SORT OF A SCREENING OFFICER FOR THIS PROJECT?

A. I AM NOT PREPARED TO GO INTO DETAILS.

Q. CAN'T OR WON'T?

A. I CAN'T AND I WILL NOT.

Q. IS THE EXTENT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S QUARREL WITH MR. SHEEHAN THE USE OF VERBATIM OR THE USE OF PURPORTED VERBATIM CONVERSATIONS, IS THAT ALONE ITS COMPLAINT ABOUT THE ARTICLE, WHICH IS TO BECOME A BOOK, I UNDERSTAND?

A. AS FAR AS MR. SHEEHAN IS CONCERNED, I BELIEVE THAT WHAT WE QUESTIONED WAS HIS USE OF THE WORD "VERBATIM." (WE SAID ON MARCH 5 THAT SO FAR AS THE DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED, THE USE OF THE TERM "VERBATIM" TO DESCRIBE THE CONVERSATIONS QUOTED IS INACCURATE.) WHEN WE WERE ASKED ABOUT THE ACCURACY OF THE CONTENTS, WE REPLIED, AS WE ALWAYS DO WHEN

WE ARE ASKED ABOUT REPORTS THAT CLAIM TO BE ACCOUNTS OF CONVERSATIONS, THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO COMMENT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. THAT IS THE ONLY QUESTION THAT WE RAISED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 16 STATE 058289

ABOUT MR. SHEEHAN AT THIS POINT.

Q. THAT IS THE ONLY RULE OR UNDERSTANDING HE BROKE.

A. WHAT WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT IS NOT WHAT MR. SHEEHAN ASKED, BUT HOW OFFICIALS ANSWERED HIS QUESTIONS.

Q. BUT I AM TRYING TO GET TO MR. SHEEHAN'S ROLE, BECAUSE I WOULD SUGGEST TO YOU THAT HIS WORK WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT, AND THEY WERE HAPPY TO HAVE HIM DO THIS JOB. THEY MADE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIM. HE CAME ON THE PLANE AS A JOURNALIST WHEN NOW HE IS REFERRED TO AS A SCHOLAR. AND WITHOUT JUMPING WAY AHEAD, THIS IS THE ONLY COMPLAINT YOU HAVE WITH THE PRODUCT, THAT IT PURPORTS TO HAVE VERBATIM CONVERSATIONS THAT VIOLATES A RULE.

A. I WOULD NOT CHARACTERIZE OUR FEELING ABOUT COOPERATING WITH MR. SHEEHAN AS BEING HAPPY. I DON'T THINK I REFERRED TO HIM AS A SCHOLAR. HE IS A SCHOLAR, OBVIOUSLY, AND HE ALSO IS AN AUTHOR, AND HE ALSO WAS A FORMER PRESS ATTACHE, I BELIEVE. BUT WHAT OUR PRIMARY CONCERN IS -- OUR PRIME CONCERN IN FACT IS -- NOT THE QUESTIONS HE ASKED BUT THE ANSWERS HE MAY HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS. I CANNOT COMMENT ON THE ANSWERS THAT HE GOT FROM OTHER PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF THE DEPARTMENT, AND HE SPOKE TO A LOT OF PEOPLE.

NOW, THERE IS ONE QUESTION THAT REMAINS UNANSWERED, AND THAT IS -- AND I JUST SAID I AM NOT ABLE TO ANSWER IT NOW -- AND THAT IS, DO ANY OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WHO WERE BRIEFED BY MR. SHEEHAN MAINTAIN THAT HE VIOLATED UNDERSTANDINGS THAT THEY HAD AS TO THE NATURE OF THEIR BRIEFINGS. AND THAT IS THE QUESTION THAT I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER.

Q. WELL, DOES THE SECRETARY -- I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN ANSWER THIS -- DOES THE SECRETARY CONSIDER HIS ACCOUNT ONE THAT IS FAVORABLE TO THE SECRETARY?

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PAGE 17 STATE 058289

A. I JUST DO NOT KNOW.

Q. WOULD HE COOPERATE WITH HIM AGAIN? I DON'T KNOW IF SHEEHAN HAS COMPLETED THE BOOK, BUT LET'S ASSUME THAT HE HAD MORE QUESTIONS TO ASK. WOULD THE SECRETARY ARRANGE FOR THE SAME TYPES OF BRIEFINGS THAT HE ARRANGED BEFORE FOR MR. SHEEHAN?

A. THAT IS NOT A QUESTION; THAT WE REALLY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING IN OUR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE SHEEHAN ARTICLE, SINCE THIS STORY BROKE.

Q. I HAVE A SPECIFIC QUESTION HERE.

A. HAVE I COMPLETELY ANSWERED YOUR QUESTION?

Q. WELL, I GUESS TO SOME EXTENT. BECAUSE THE ARTICLE, THE WHOLE PROCEDURE STRIKES ME, YOU KNOW, AS KIND OF AN AUTHORIZED PRODUCTION, AND YOU DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE WENT ABOUT IT IN SOME RESPECTS.

A. WE ARE NOT REALLY CONCERNED WHETHER THE ARTICLE IS FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE.

Q. OR FALSE OR TRUE.

A. WHAT WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT IS, DID STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS DISCLOSE CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TO HIM. THAT IS WHAT WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT. WE ARE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THESE OTHER --

Q. I HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH YOUR DENIAL THAT THESE ARE VERBATIM CONVERSATIONS. ISN'T IT A FACT THAT A MEMCON OR A MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION IS NEVER A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT BUT ONLY THE WRITTEN DOWN RECOLLECTIONS OF A NOTE-TAKER, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT? THEY ARE NEVER VERBATIM. THEY ARE NOT STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTS EVER, ARE THEY?

A. THERE ARE MEMCON'S AND MEMCON'S. SOME ARE VERY EXPLICIT AND SOME ARE VERY DETAILED AND SOME DO CONTAIN DIRECT QUOTES.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 18 STATE 058289

Q. WHEN YOU SAY THEY ARE NOT VERBATIM, THAT DOESN'T REALLY MEAN ANYTHING, DOES IT?

A. IT MEANS THEY ARE NOT VERBATIM.

Q. WHEN THE SECRETARY AUTHORIZED COOPERATION WITH MR. SHEEHAN, YOU SAY THAT THE SECRETARY DID NOT AUTHORIZE THE DISCLOSURE OF THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS. DID THE SECRETARY IN FACT PUT ANY INHIBITIONS ON THE LIMITS OF COOPERATION WITH MR. SHEEHAN?

A. I DO NOT KNOW THE VARIOUS EXCHANGES THAT MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN PLACE. BUT I CAN SAY IN A GENERAL WAY THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE DOES NOT NEED TO TELL ME THAT I SHOULD NOT REVEAL CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TO UNAUTHORIZED PEOPLE. I KNOW THAT. AND MOST OTHER OFFICIALS KNOW THAT, AS WELL.

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE AN INTELLIGENT DISCUSSION OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY WITHOUT WORKING WITH THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS?

A. MY ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION, IS THE ANSWER THAT I GAVE EARLIER: THAT PRACTICALLY EVERY QUESTION THAT I AM ASKED HERE, OR EVERY ANSWER THAT I GIVE TO QUESTIONS HERE, MOST OF THE INFORMATION PROBABLY IS CLASSIFIED BEFORE WE GIVE THE ANSWER.

Q. DOES THAT MEAN NO, THEN?

A. THERE IS A DISTINCTION.

Q. IS THE ANSWER NO, THEN, TO MY QUESTION?

A. I DO NOT RECALL EVER REVEALING THE CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS IN THIS BRIEFING.

Q. SO THEY WERE DECLASSIFIED FOR THE SAKE OF THE BRIEF-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 19 STATE 058289

ING, IS WHAT YOU ARE SAYING, THEN?

A. I THINK IT HAS TO BE VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF -- IF YOU WILL LOOK AT WHAT WE SAID ON FRIDAY -- THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE, AND A VERY FIRM PRINCIPLE THAT WE INTEND TO ADHERE TO, AND THAT IS TO PROTECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WE HAVE WITH OFFICIALS OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

Q. THAT IS NOT MY POINT. MY QUESTION IS WHETHER ONE CAN DISCUSS MIDDLE EAST, OR FOR THAT MATTER PRACTICALLY ANY OTHER U.S. POLICY WITHOUT DISCUSSING WHAT IS IN

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS?

A. YES, I THINK YOU CAN, AND I THINK IT IS DONE ALL THE TIME.

Q. THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO GET CLARIFIED, IF YOU CAN DO IT FOR US.

ON TWO OCCASIONS FROM THIS PODIUM, THE STATE DEPARTMENT, ACTING ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES REBUKED A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT, NAMELY ISRAEL, FOR THE LEAKAGE OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED BETWEEN AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND ISRAELI OFFICIALS.

THE SHEEHAN ARTICLE, ACCORDING TO MY COUNT, CARRIED ABOUT TWENTY-ONE EXCERPTS OF WHAT LOOKED TO BE TRANSCRIPTS, WHETHER THEY WERE FROM MEMOS OF CONVERSATIONS OR TAPES OR WHAT, I DON'T KNOW. BUT THEY HAD A Q AND A IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS -- KING FAISAL, ALLON, RABIN, OTHERS -- SADAT -- THESE CONSTITUTE WHAT WOULD APPEAR VIOLATIONS OF THIS PRINCIPLE OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

ISRAEL WAS REBUKED TWICE. IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT NOW GOING TO APOLOGIZE TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF ALL THESE COUNTRIES, WHICH WERE NOTED IN THIS SHEEHAN ARTICLE, BECAUSE OF THE VIOLATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY, AN ADMISSION OF GUILT, WHETHER IT WAS BY ANY OFFICER OF THE GOVERNMENT, OR WHAT?

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 20 STATE 058289

A. FIRST, WE HAVE NOT COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATION, SECOND, AS I NOTED YESTERDAY, MR. SHEEHAN, IN HIS TELEVISION INTERVIEW YESTERDAY MORNING APPEARED, OR INFERRED THAT HE WAS BACKING AWAY FROM DESCRIBING THE CONVERSATIONS HE REPORTED AS VERBATIM. SO, THERE IS SOME QUESTION, EVEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE ARTICLE HIMSELF, WHETHER THEY WERE VERBATIM.

THIRD, WE CERTAINLY REJECT THE DESCRIPTION OF ANY ACCOUNTS HE HAD AS VERBATIM.

Q. WELL, IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF VERBATIM, WHETHER OR NOT EVERY ARTICLE, EVERY WORD, EVERY SENTENCE, WHETHER

IT WAS IN TOTO OR PART -- THE FACT REMAINS THAT IN ONE INSTANCE OR IN TWO INSTANCES, THAT I CAN RECALL, I BELIEVE, RIGHT NOW -- THE SECRETARY TALKED ABOUT PLANNING OF HOW HE WAS GOING TO PRESENT THE CASE OF THE MIDDLE EAST TO THE

AMERICAN PUBLIC. THIS WAS WITH KING FAISAL. HE DISCUSSED THINGS WITH THE ISRAELIS, WHICH WERE VERY REVEALING IN A SENSE, IF IT IS ACCURATE. THESE ARE LEAKAGES WHICH EMBARRASS GOVERNMENTS AND INDIVIDUALS, I THINK. IF THIS

HAPPENED, SAY, IF THESE WERE REVEALED, SAY, IN EGYPT, WOULD THE UNITED STATES NOT MAKE A PROTEST?

A. I DO NOT THINK THERE IS ANY DOUBT -- OR I WOULD HOPE THERE IS NOT ANY DOUBT IN ANYONE'S MIND -- OF HOW SERIOUSLY WE VIEW THIS MATTER, SINCE WE FIRST LEARNED OF IT, OR SINCE WE FIRST DISCUSSED THIS MATTER LAST FRIDAY. OUR SERIOUS CONCERN OVER THIS GROSS VIOLATION. WE ARE CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION. THE SECRETARY OF STATE HIMSELF HAS PERSONALLY TALKED TO SOME PEOPLE. I THINK ALL OF THAT CLEARLY SUGGESTS THAT WE ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT THIS MATTER, BUT WE HAVE NOT COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATION AS YET.

Q. ARE YOU IN RECEIPT OF ANY PROTESTS FROM ANY GOVERNMENT ABOUT THESE DISCLOSURES?

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PAGE 21 STATE 058289

A. THAT WAS THE FIRST QUESTION I ANSWERED, AND THE ANSWER WAS NO.

Q. I HAD A QUESTION IN RELATION TO THAT, THEN, WHICH I HAVE BEEN HOLDING OFF FOR SOME TIME. YOU SAID THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED NO PROTESTS. THE ARGUMENT HAS BEEN MADE WHEN LEAKS IN OTHER AREAS OF GOVERNMENT, IN RELATED AREAS OF GOVERNMENT, HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED, THE ARGUMENT HAS BEEN MADE THAT, WELL, OTHER GOVERNMENTS, THEIR AGENTS WON'T COOPERATE WITH US. WE CAN'T GET INFORMATION FROM THEIR AGENTS IF THEY KNOW THAT WE CAN'T KEEP A SECRET.

IS A PARALLEL ARGUMENT BEING MADE HERE THAT LEADERS OF OTHER NATIONS WILL BE RELUCTANT TO BE AS CANDID AND AS FRANK AS THEY HAVE BEEN FORMERLY, AS A RESULT OF THINGS LIKE THIS?

A. I WOULD JUST REFER YOU TO THE ANSWERS I GAVE TO QUESTIONS ON FRIDAY. I EMPHASIZED ON FRIDAY OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES, AND REITERATED THAT AS OUR FIRM POLICY.

Q. THE PEOPLE WHO BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN, WERE THEY REQUIRED TO SUBMIT LITTLE MEMOS ON WHAT THEY HAD DONE AT THAT TIME?

A. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

Q. WAS THERE ANY MONITORING OF THEIR BRIEFING?

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. MAY I SUBMIT THAT AS A QUESTION?

A. YES.

Q. WERE THEY MONITORED THEMSELVES IN ANY WAY? WERE THEY
REQUIRED TO SUBMIT LITTLE SUMMARIES OF WHAT THEY HAD
DONE?

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 22 STATE 058289

A. I DO NOT KNOW. I WOULD JUST POINT OUT, THOUGH, I HAVE
A QUESTION OF DOUBT WHETHER THAT WAS DONE. BECAUSE THE
SECRETARY HAD NO IDEA THAT IN FACT THEY WERE REVEALING
CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS, AND THAT IS CERTAINLY THE ALLEGA-
TION WHICH WE ARE LOOKING IN TO.

Q. YOU HAVE GIVEN US THE DATE OF THE SECRETARY'S MEETINGS
WITH MR. SHEEHAN. CAN YOU GIVE US THE TIME-FRAME OR THE
CUT-OFF FOR THIS WHOLE PERIOD THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT?

A. YOU MEAN WHEN DID MR. SHEEHAN BEGIN INTERVIEWING
OFFICIALS?

Q. RIGHT.

A. I WILL TAKE THAT QUESTION. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER
TO IT.

Q. YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN HE STOPPED?

A. I DO NOT. I WILL TAKE THAT.

Q. HAS ANYBODY IN THE DEPARTMENT TALKED WITH MR. SHEEHAN
SINCE THE TEXT OF THIS ARTICLE WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO
PEOPLE IN GENERAL?

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE US A CHARACTERIZATION OF THE
PRESENTATION THAT MR. SHEEHAN MADE?

A. NO, I AM NOT.

Q. OR AS THE DEPARTMENT DID WITH THE PRESENTATIONS OF MATERIALS THAT WERE REVEALED BY THE PIKE COMMITTEE.

A. I THINK I ANSWERED THAT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE BRIEFING

Q. NO, ABOUT THE REPORTS EMANATING FROM THE PIKE COMMITTEE.

A. YES, I THINK I ANSWERED THAT. I WAS ASKED YESTERDAY: DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 23 STATE 058289

LEAKS OR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES THAT TAKE PLACE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, AND THOSE THAT TAKE PLACE OUTSIDE OF THE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THE CONGRESS. AND I WAS ASKED YESTERDAY, I THINK THE QUESTIONER SAID, "AND YOU CRITICIZED SOME OF THOSE LEAKS AS MCCARTHYISM." AND MY ANSWER TODAY WAS THAT THE REASON THE SECRETARY WAS CRITICAL OF THE PIKE COMMITTEE LEAKS WAS BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THAT THOSE LEAKS WERE DISTORTED AND INACCURATE AND MALICIOUS.

Q. ALL RIGHT. NOW, ARE THESE LEAKS DISTORTED, INACCURATE AND MALICIOUS?

A. AGAIN, WE HAVEN'T COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATION. YOU WILL RECALL THAT I SAID ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE INVESTIGATION IS TO LOOK AT THE MOTIVATION OF THE OFFICIALS WHO MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE PROVIDED UNAUTHORIZED INFORMATION. THAT IS A VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENT.

Q. WERE THESE DISCLOSURES CONSIDERED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WHETHER THEY ARE ACCURATE OR NOT, OR MALICIOUS OR NOT, DAMAGING TO THE CONDUCT OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES?

A. WE HAVE NOT ADDRESSED THAT QUESTION SPECIFICALLY.

Q. YOU PUZZLE ME WHEN YOU SAY THAT ONE OF THE MAIN OBJECTIVES IS TO LOOK AT THE MOTIVATION OF THE OFFICIALS INVOLVED.

A. THAT WOULD BE ONE OF THE ELEMENTS, YES.

Q. I WOULD ASSUME THAT THE MOTIVATION OF THE OFFICIALS INVOLVED WAS TO CARRY OUT THE SECRETARY'S INSTRUCTIONS TO COOPERATE WITH MR. SHEEHAN. DO YOU HAVE SOME OTHER ULTERIOR MOTIVE IN MIND?

A. NO. I THINK WHAT I AM SUGGESTING IS THAT SOMETIMES THE MOTIVATION OF PEOPLE WHO LEAK DOCUMENTS MIGHT BE TO BE MALICIOUS, OR BE TO PRESENT SOME SORT OF A DISTORTED ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED. AND OBVIOUSLY WHEN YOU ARE IN-

VESTIGATING THIS KIND OF AN UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE, YOU
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 24 STATE 058289

DO EXAMINE THE MOTIVATION OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. AND WE
HAVE NO INDICATION THAT THAT KIND OF MOTIVATION IS IN-
VOLVED. BUT OBVIOUSLY THIS IS AN ELEMENT OF ANY INVESTI-
GATION WHEN YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION AS TO WHAT KIND OF
DISCIPLINARY ACTION YOU WILL TAKE.

Q. THIS IS UNPRECEDENTED, THEN, BY WHAT YOU HAVE SAID.
THERE IS A SUGGESTION THAT DISCIPLINARY ACTION MIGHT BE
RATHER SEVERE. SO, LET ME ASK YOU IF YOU CAN FIND OUT IF
THERE WILL BE A HEARING FORMAT, AND IF THE PEOPLE BEING
QUESTIONED ARE PERMITTED TO HAVE -- WILL THIS PROCEDURE
BE IN A LEGAL SETTING? WILL THERE BE A HEARING ARRANGED,
AND WILL THE OFFICER OR OFFICERS INVOLVED HAVE THE RIGHT
TO BRING THEIR LAWYER WITH THEM, SINCE I SUPPOSE THEIR
CAREER MIGHT BE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN. IF YOU TAKE IT ALL
AS SERIOUSLY AS YOU SEEM TO.

A. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

Q. JOE KRAFT, IN HIS COLUMN TODAY, SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT
THE INFORMATION WAS CONVEYED TO SHEEHAN FROM KISSINGER
THROUGH ATHERTON.

A. THAT IS FALSE.

Q. I SAID JOE KRAFT--I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT WORDING, BUT
HE SAID THAT THE INFORMATION TO SHEEHAN WAS CONVEYED FROM
KISSINGER THROUGH ATHERTON. MY QUESTION IS--I KNOW YOUR
DENIAL ON THE FIRST PART. THE SECOND PART IS: WAS MR.
ATHERTON THE PRIME BRIEFER OF MR. SHEEHAN?

A. I TOOK THAT QUESTION YESTERDAY AND MY ANSWER TODAY--I
WAS ALSO ASKED FOR THE IDENTITY OF PERSONS--MR. ATHERTON'S
NAME WAS MENTIONED, ALSO MR. SISCO, AND I WAS ALSO ASKED
TO NAME OTHER OFFICIALS. MY ANSWER WAS THAT I DECLINE TO
IDENTIFY AT THIS TIME THE OFFICIALS WHO BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN,
EXCEPT TO SAY THAT SEVERAL STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS
BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. JUST TO CLARIFY THE RECORD THERE, YOU WERE RESPONDING
EARLIER "THAT'S FALSE" TO WHICH QUESTION?
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 25 STATE 058289

A. TO THE ALLEGATION, AS REPORTED THAT MR. KRAFT APPARENTLY MADE THIS MORNING: THAT THE SECRETARY HAD PROVIDED THIS INFORMATION IN A DIRECT WAY TO MR. SHEEHAN THROUGH MR. ATHERTON. THIS IS ABSOLUTELY FALSE.

Q. JUST FOR CLARIFICATION. I'M NOT SURE THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT THE REPORT SAID. I BELIEVE--MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE REPORT SAID THAT ATHERTON WAS THE SOURCE OF THE INFORMATION.

Q. NO. BUT LET'S CHECK THE RECORD.

Q. AT ANY RATE--

A. JUST TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR, THE SECRETARY, ON THE SHEEHAN PROJECT, MET WITH MR. SHEEHAN ONCE FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES, AND THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS IN THAT MEETING. SECONDLY, AS FOR THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL APPROVAL OF THE SHEEHAN PROJECT: HE DID GIVE A GENERAL APPROVAL AND AUTHORIZED DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS TO BE HELPFUL IN A GENERAL WAY IN ANSWERING MR. SHEEHAN'S QUESTIONS, BUT HE DID NOT AUTHORIZE THAT THE CONTENTS OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS BE REVEALED.

Q. ALL RIGHT. THAT'S WHAT I WAS TRYING TO ASCERTAIN--WHETHER YOU WERE EXPLICITLY DENYING HERE THAT ATHERTON WAS THE SOURCE OF THE INFORMATION.

A. I'M DECLINING TO IDENTIFY ANY OFFICIAL WHO MAY HAVE BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. ANOTHER QUESTION--AND I HAVE A SECOND ONE: EARLIER ON, AS YOU HAD INDICATED FRIDAY AND YOU REITERATED YESTERDAY, IF THIS HAD BEEN DONE, THAT IS--AS OF NOW IT IS STILL AWFULLY CONDITIONAL, AS YOU'RE PROJECTING IT.

A. I WOULDN'T USE THE ADVERB, BUT WE STILL HAVE NOT COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATION OR OUR DETERMINATION OF THE FACTS OR OUR EXAMINATION OF THIS MATTER.

Q. IN THE MEETING BETWEEN SHEEHAN AND THE SECRETARY, DID LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 26 STATE 058289

THE SECRETARY DISCUSS ANY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION?

A. I SAID THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AT THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH MR. SHEEHAN.

Q. I'M AVOIDING THE WORD "DOCUMENTS." "DOCUMENTS," I THINK, IS SOMETHING THAT WE'RE GETTING HUNG UP ON. AND

THAT'S WHY I'D LIKE TO KNOW IF THERE'S ANY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION DISCUSSED.

AND THE SECOND QUESTION IS THAT ONCE MR. SHEEHAN WAS BRIEFED BY THE OTHERS, COULD WE ASSUME THAT SINCE EVERYTHING IN THIS AREA INVOLVES CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, THEY WERE GENERALLY CLEAR TO DISCUSS CLASSIFIED INFORMATION BUT NOT TO PROVIDE THE DOCUMENTS? LET'S AVOID THE WORD YOU'RE USING--THE WORD DOCUMENTS.

A. YOU CANNOT, BECAUSE THAT IS CENTRAL TO THE WHOLE PROBLEM--THAT IS THE CENTRAL ELEMENT--

Q. MY FIRST QUESTION--

A. --THE CONCERN THAT PERHAPS CONTENTS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS WERE REVEALED.

Q. ALL RIGHT. DID THE SECRETARY DISCUSS CLASSIFIED INFORMATION WITH MR. SHEEHAN?

A. I THINK THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS THE ANSWER I GAVE ABOUT MY OWN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Q. I MUST HAVE MISSED THAT ANSWER THEN.

A. PEOPLE HAD ASKED THIS QUESTION SEVERAL DIFFERENT TIMES DURING THE COURSE OF THIS BRIEFING. MY ANSWER WAS THAT MOST OF THE ANSWERS--A LOT OF THE ANSWERS--I AM NOT PREPARED TO QUANTIFY IT EXACTLY--THAT I GIVE TO QUESTIONS--PERHAPS YESTERDAY THAT INFORMATION MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED. A JUDGMENT HAS TO BE MADE IN THIS BUILDING ON HOW WE RESPOND TO QUESTIONS--

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PAGE 27 STATE 058289

Q. --AREN'T YOU ANSWERING "YES"?

Q. --THEN WE CAN ASSUME--

Q. --WITHOUT KNOWING.

A. --BUT WITHOUT VIOLATING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES.

Q. BUT SINCE EVERYTHING GOES ON IN THE WORLD, INCLUDING THE QUESTION I'M GOING TO ASK YOU--WHAT YOUR REACTION IS TO THE BOMB TOSSED THROUGH A BUILDING HOUSING THE CZECHOSLOVAK AND SOVIET NATIONAL AIRLINES, YOU PROBABLY HAVE AN ANSWER THERE AND IT'S CLASSIFIED RIGHT NOW UNTIL YOU GIVE

IT. SO CERTAINLY THE DISCUSSION WITH THE SECRETARY ABOUT WHAT HE THOUGHT OF SADAT OR ASSAD OR THOUGHT OF GOLDA MEIR WOULD BE CLASSIFIED.

A. BUT THAT IS WHY I AM SAYING THAT YOU CANNOT FORGET ABOUT CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AND REVEALING THEIR CONTENTS.

Q. YOU'RE SAYING "YES, BECAUSE" -- BUT THE ANSWER IS CLEARLY A "YES," ISN'T IT? "YES," BECAUSE THE WHOLE WORLD IS CLASSIFIED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT--BUT THE ANSWER IS "YES," ISN'T IT?

A. WE DO NOT CLASSIFY THE WHOLE WORLD, BUT A LOT OF INFORMATION--

Q. CAN ONE ASSUME THAT WHOEVER BRIEFED MR. SHEEHAN WAS GIVEN THE AUTHORIZATION TO DISCUSS CLASSIFIED INFORMATION?

A. THERE WAS NO AUTHORIZATION FOR ANYONE TO REVEAL CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS TO MR. SHEEHAN. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR FIRM POLICY OF RESPECTING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES.

Q. WAS THERE ANY AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE CLASSIFIED INFORMATION OR WAS THAT UNDERSTOOD?

A. THAT IS A HARD QUESTION TO ANSWER, FRANKLY, BECAUSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 28 STATE 058289

IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS MYSELF, AS WELL AS OTHER OFFICIALS IN BRIEFINGS, SOME INFORMATION IS CLASSIFIED, SOME OF IT IS UNCLASSIFIED. THERE ARE ALSO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF AUTHORITY AS TO DECLASSIFICATION PROCEDURES, FOR EXAMPLE.

THERE ARE DOCUMENTS--I THINK I HAD BETTER GO ON BACKGROUND BECAUSE I AM NOT ABSOLUTELY SURE OF IT--BUT THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RANK OF OFFICERS WHO HAVE AUTHORIZATION TO DECLASSIFY INFORMATION, FOR EXAMPLE, AND CERTAINLY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS, CAN DECLASSIFY INFORMATION. END BACKGROUND.

Q. THIS GETS BACK TO THAT POINT I TRIED TO GET AT EARLIER ABOUT DIRECT QUOTATIONS FROM CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS. IF AN OFFICIAL IN THIS BUILDING TELLS ME THAT A LEADER OF X COUNTRY IS CRAZY AS A LOON ON A PERSONAL BASIS, THAT'S A JUDGMENT; WE'RE OPERATING UNDER SOME KIND OF GROUND RULES. BUT IF THAT COMES OUT OF A CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT, OBVIOUSLY IT'S MUCH MORE SENSITIVE. ISN'T THIS THE KIND OF DISTINCTION WE'RE MAKING?

A. I WILL OBSERVE YOUR POINT, BUT I REALLY DO NOT WANT TO RESPOND TO IT.

Q. YOU WERE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANYTHING THAT THE SECRETARY TOLD SHEEHAN THAT COULD BE REGARDED AS CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

A. I SAID AT THE OUTSET OF THIS BRIEFING THAT THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF ANY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS IN THE MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MR. SHEEHAN. BY DEFINITION, THE SECRETARY DOES HAVE AUTHORITY--MORE AUTHORITY THAN ANYONE ELSE, I SUPPOSE, IN THE BUILDING--TO MAKE DETERMINATIONS AT WHAT LEVELS INFORMATION CAN BE DECLASSIFIED--AS DO ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, AS EVEN TO SPOKESMEN.

Q. THE QUESTION I THINK COMES DOWN TO THIS: CAN YOU DEFINE WHAT A "DOCUMENT" IS, AND CAN YOU DEFINE WHAT "INFORMATION" IS--BOTH CLASSIFIED MATERIALS? THIS IS WHERE THE CRUX IS.

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PAGE 29 STATE 058289

A. WHEN YOU SAY THAT THERE IS NO AUTHORIZATION TO REVEAL THE CONTENT OF A CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT, IT IS VERY CLEAR TO ME THAT THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR FIRM POLICY TO RESPECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES. AND I DO NOT THINK THERE IS A QUESTION IN THE MINDS OF OFFICERS IN THIS BUILDING AS TO WHAT THAT MEANS.

Q. THERE IS A QUESTION HERE, IT SEEMS TO ME. I MEAN THE PEOPLE ARE WONDERING IF THE SECRETARY OR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, TALKING WITH A NEWSMAN OR WHOEVER--SOME OUTSIDER--AND SAYS TO HIM: "WHEN I WAS TALKING WITH MR.SADAT, I SAID TO HIM 'YOU'RE SILLY ABOUT THIS. THE WAY YOU WANT TO DO THIS IS BY BRINGING IT BEFORE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IN SOME OTHER WAY.'" IS THIS A DOCUMENT OR IS THIS INFORMATION?

A. --KIND OF BRIEFING, IN MY JUDGMENT, WAS NOT AUTHORIZED UNDER THE GROUND RULES AS PROVIDED IN THE SHEEHAN PROJECT, AND I THINK THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN SAYING.

Q. AND THE SECRETARY DID NOT ENGAGE IN SUCH CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. SHEEHAN? HE DIDN'T SAY: "AND THEN I SAID TO SADAT AND SADAT SAID TO ME"?

A. THAT IS ABSOLUTELY CORRECT.

Q. ON THE PLANE OR ANYPLACE ELSE?

A. THAT IS ABSOLUTELY CORRECT.

Q. JUST ONE TECHNICAL QUESTION. WILL MR. EAGLEBURGER MAKE AN EXPLANATION OF ALL THIS? WITH DUE RESPECT TO YOU, I'M NOT TRYING TO DEMEAN YOU IN ANY WAY, BECAUSE YOU'VE GONE THROUGH A VERY HEROIC BRIEFING.

A. I HAVE A FEELING THAT SAME QUESTION--THAT SAME QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED AT LEAST THREE TIMES: WOULD WE MAKE PUBLIC THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION? I SAID I WAS NOT ABLE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

Q. NO, NO--NOT THAT. I MEAN WHETHER HE WILL--WHEN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 30 STATE 058289

INVESTIGATION IS FINISHED, WHETHER IT'S MADE PUBLIC OR NOT,

WILL HE COME DOWN AND TELL US JUST WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAN.

Q. BOB, CAN I ASK RELATIVE TO THIS: DO MEMCONS AT ANY LEVEL EVER LEAVE THE STATE DEPARTMENT? IN OTHER WORDS, MIGHT A MEMCON BE GIVEN, LET'S SAY TO A RANKING MEMBER OF CONGRESS?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE DOCUMENT ITSELF IS. I WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED. BUT, OBVIOUSLY, CLASSIFIED INFORMATION--VERY SENSITIVE INFORMATION--IS REGULARLY PROVIDED TO CONGRESS ON THE CONDUCT OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PFOR, US, (SHEEHAN, EDWARD)
To: AMMAN MULTIPLE
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